

A History of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club
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Part 4.

In 1958 the Club was holding their meetings in the basement of the Donald Street Police Station (Fort William). As a radio Club room this left much to be desired. Arriving for the usual monthly meeting late in the year, it was found that the room had been taken over, in our absence, by what looked to be a weight-lifters club. There were dumb bells and weights of all shapes and sizes scattered everywhere. The Ham Club was very apparently turned out on the street again. Fortunately at this time, there was a new building under construction on Waterloo Street to be used as the Civil Defence headquarters. The day was saved when we obtained permission to use the lecture room as a Radio Room. This looked like an ideal arrangement. Our first meeting was held here in February 1959. Since that time we continued to enjoy the modem facilities provided. The Radio Room, complete with the usual Civil Defence equipment has been augmented by our own modem SSB transceiver and two metre gear. (*The EMO building was to be demolished in the 1980s and meetings moved, at that time, to rooms in Confederation College.*)

Field Day of 1960 saw the advent of more sophisticated equipment and an improvement in living accommodation. A two element quad antenna was erected by Bob Nash - VE3BHS for use on 20 metres. The location this time was the site of an old farm house on Marks Road (Highway 590), a beautiful site overlooking the Slate River Valley. Equipment for one frequency was set up in the old farm house, which still had wall-to-wall floors but not much else. Hec Wilson - VE3DMZ appeared on the scene in a big house trailer which took care of housing his gear and supported one end of his antenna. This was the first time such a combination had been seen at a Field Day. Pictures in the Club's photo album prove that there were twenty members present on this occasion.

The facilities provided by the EMO building were ideal for a project commenced in 1965 for the training of would-be amateur operators. Under the leadership of Dave Kimpton - VE3AVS and Doc Tarnow - VE3FSE (now VE4TO) thirty aspiring hams were given training in sending and receiving Morse and lectured on the intricacies of radio transmitters and receivers every Saturday afternoon. The requirements of the Government examination (set by D.O.C.) are quite considerable. To facilitate the absorption of this information in as painful a manner as possible the two instructors spent a great deal of time in drawing up a set of Questions and Answers and in the making of drawings etc. on the theory and practical operation of radio transmitters and receivers. This meant a lot of hard work by both teachers and pupils. It was to be expected that some of the latter would weaken during the summer months and fall by the wayside. However, the combined efforts of teacher and pupils resulted in six new amateurs at the end of the year.

This training programme was repeated in 1971 on a somewhat smaller scale under the leadership of Bill Klemacki - VE3EEW assisted by Peter Boyle - VE3DPJ.